



“better THAN “PERFECT”

Better Than Perfect

Text: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Founding Pastor Ken Werlein

1. Analyze the self you project to what you believe to be your true self on the inside.
 - a. What disconnects do you see?
 - b. Where do you feel the most pressure to “keep up with the Joneses?”
 - c. Why do you think you play up certain things and downplay certain things?
 - d. Do you find yourself focusing more on the outside than the inside?
 - e. What does your life say about the focus of your heart?
2. Ken makes the point that if we want to have a heart for God, we must humble ourselves and submit our lives to Him. How do we surrender ourselves to God? What practical steps are involved in surrendering our lives to God?
3. In Romans 6:12-14, Paul gives some clarity about what it looks like to submit our lives to Christ. According to this passage, what are the two main steps we must take if we want to submit our lives to Christ?
 - a. What are some practical ways that you avoid falling prey to sin?
 - b. What does it mean for us to be “instruments of righteousness”?
 - c. How can we help each other avoid sin and practice righteousness?
4. We can’t surrender to God and experience a transformed heart on our own. We must have God’s power working in our lives. God’s power comes to us in the form of the Holy Spirit. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives?
 - a. How have you experienced the transformational power of the Holy Spirit in your own life?
 - b. The Holy Spirit is always working on our hearts, convicting us of our sin so that we can repent and submit ourselves to Christ. What areas of your life do you suspect the Holy Spirit is currently working on?

5. Why do you think God would use someone like David, who from the outside did not look very “kingly” to become the greatest human king in the history of Israel? What does this mean for you and me? (See also 1 Corinthians 1:18-31)

Challenge: Have you been struggled with focusing on the outside? Both of yourself and others? Who does God want you to see as He sees them?

Prayer: Father God, giver of life, creator of all things. We confess that we far too often focus on the external. We are consumed at times with how we look, the things we have, our image, and our status. God, you look beyond those things and see our hearts. We pray today and ask God that you would fill us with your power, with your Holy Spirit, so that we can like David also have a heart for God. Give us the humility, diligence, and perseverance to be faithful in all things—big and small—as we grow in our character and maturity. Thank you for your son Jesus, that in Him, we have new hearts. It’s in His name we pray, Amen.

STUDY DEEPER

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

- Genesis 1:1–2

God’s own Spirit, Joel tells us, is poured out upon all of His people in the last days (Joel 2:28–29). We know that this outpouring happened on Pentecost, shortly after Jesus ascended to heaven (Acts 2:1–21), but to fully enjoy the Spirit’s presence in our lives, we must understand who He is and what He does. Over the next week, volume 5 of Dr. R. C. Sproul’s teaching series Foundations, which covers pneumatology (the doctrine of the Holy Spirit), will guide us in a study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

You will note that in the preceding paragraph, we repeatedly referred to the Holy Spirit as “He,” not “it.” This reflects the teaching of Scripture that the Spirit is not an impersonal force or a mere attribute of God’s power, but rather a person. Many sects and cults teach otherwise, yet the use of the personal pronoun for the Holy Spirit and the fact that the Spirit possesses a will, knowledge, and affections reveals His personhood (John 16:4b–11; Eph. 4:30). We have a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit just as we have a personal relationship with the other two persons of the Holy Trinity.

The best place to begin our study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is at the beginning, for the first place we read about the Spirit is in the opening verses of the Bible. Today’s passage reveals that at the moment of creation, God the Holy Spirit hovered over the primordial waters that our Creator had made ex nihilo, that is, “out of nothing” (Gen. 1:1–2). By His power in creation, He brought forth light out of darkness and order out of disorder. Thus, one of the key works of the Holy Spirit is to bring things to life

and to set things in order. He is the Spirit of order, as Paul explains, for “God is not a God of confusion but of peace” (1 Cor. 14:33).

Throughout the Old Testament, we see the Holy Spirit working also in redemption. We have noted that the old covenant ministry of the Spirit to gift individuals for service was mainly limited to prophets, priests, and kings, although He regenerated all believers during the old covenant period. The Holy Spirit anointed prophets to speak God’s Word, priests to intercede for the people, and kings to lead Israel against the enemies of God (1 Sam. 16:13; 2 Chron. 24:20; 2 Peter 1:21). The Lord used all these individuals to advance His plan of redemption, pointing ultimately to Christ, whom the Spirit anointed as our Prophet, Priest, and King to secure our eternal salvation (Heb. 1:1–4; 9:14).

Coram Deo

In the church today, we are seeing a renewed emphasis on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, much of this emphasis is not on His work in creation and redemption to bring order out of chaos. Wherever the Spirit is truly at work, we see order in worship and lives being conformed to the image of Christ, whose whole life was ordered toward the end of pleasing the Lord. Such things result from a true biblical emphasis on the person and work of the Spirit.

Passages for Further Study

Psalm 104:24–30

Isaiah 32:14–20

Luke 3:21–22

Romans 8:1–11